





THE TUILERIES BROCHURES

EDITED BY WILLIAM DEWEY FOSTER A·I·A
PHOTOGRAPHS BY F. R. YERBURY HON. A·R·I·B·A

VOLUME II JANUARY 1930 NUMBER 1

EIGHTEENTH CENTURY BATH

TEXT BY

F. R. YERBURY, HON. A.R.I.B.A.

PUBLISHED BI-MONTHLY BY
LUDOWICI-CELADON COMPANY
MAKERS OF IMPERIAL ROOFING TILES
FOR DISTRIBUTION AMONG THE MEMBERS OF
THE ARCHITECTURAL PROFESSION



720.942
Y47



THE ROYAL CRESCENT, BATH



THE TUILERIES BROCHURES

JANUARY 1930

EIGHTEENTH CENTURY BATH

BY F. R. YERBURY, HON. A.R.I.B.A.

THE appealing beauty of the architecture of 18th century Bath and the loveliness of its natural surroundings make it one of the most attractive cities in England. Spreading itself gracefully in a hollow of the Mendip Hills, whose green park-like slopes dotted with stone-built farms and cottages can be seen from any of its streets, it has a character entirely of its own, half sophisticated, half rural. No other city in England is quite like it. No other city retains so much of the atmosphere of the 18th century which witnessed its creation. For although the history of Bath is almost as old as the history of England itself, it was the 18th century which saw its real development and the building of the crescents, parades, and well planned streets, which provided such a wonderful setting for its dazzling throng of patrons.

Before the Romans conquered England the hot springs of Bath which are still utilised, were known. The Romans attracted by these same springs and mineral waters established themselves about them for many years, building baths, temples and villas of which there are considerable and important remains today.

The Romans left and Bath fell into a decay which was checked by the establishment of an Abbey, of which the Abbey Church after many changes is the only part that remains. The ubiquitous Queen Elizabeth paid the city the compliment of a Royal visit, and the Court of Charles II honoured it with its gay presence; and the late 17th century saw it again well on the ascendant as a bathing centre for the cure of ills. Learned medicos attracted by the prospect of easily found patients settled there, and it is from one of these, a certain Dr. Guido, who published in 1675 a book which he called "A Brief History of the Bathe," that we get a very interesting description of the properties of the waters and also a valuable essay on the Roman occupation of Bath. A Dr. Pierce published a work in 1697 called "Three and Forty Years Practice

at the Bathe." From his description of the numerous cures of sickness, which he modestly tells us were "brought about by God's blessing under the directions of Robert Pierce," we may assume that in spite of the difficulties of travelling on the 17th century roads, Bath was rapidly regaining fame as a health centre. It was not, however, the polite Bath of the 18th century. For Daniel Defoe in his "Tour Through the Whole of Great Britain," gives a rather horrid picture of the insanitary conditions and rough and tumble use of the baths, in which both sexes, sometimes in the nude, disported themselves, in spite of the rubbish, refuse, dead cats and dogs which were thrown into the waters by the crude populace.

It was owing to the visit of Queen Anne, however, that the chapter of brilliant 18th century history of Bath was opened. She went there early in the century with a retinue of fashionable folk, and the difficulty experienced in finding decent accommodation for them set a movement on foot to build lodging houses for the convenience of visitors. From then Bath established herself as a centre of fashion rivalled only by London itself or perhaps Dublin. For a hundred years its gatherings were famed and the great comedy of Bath was in full swing. It afforded a setting for the elegant life of the time, and a study of Bath during the 18th century gives a picture typical of the brilliant life of 18th century England. To Bath came the fashionable Lords and Ladies from London travelling in their private coaches, sometimes perhaps robbed on the way by highwaymen. Here also came the County people, the little Squires and rich tradesmen, who for a brief moment in the year hob-nobbed with the best, at the routs, balls, breakfasts and other elegant pastimes of this half aristocratic and half democratic city.

The distance from London to Bath is 105 miles, and by stage coach in the 18th century it usually took two days to cover, but towards the end of the century a

speedy way of making the journey was by "The Flying Machine," a coach which rattled over the highways at a then almost incredible speed, and completed the journey just under twenty-four hours at a charge of 28 shillings per person.

Besides the attractions of the drinking waters, the bathing and the fashionable gatherings, there was the great attraction of the gaming-table. Gambling flourished in Bath to an extent sufficient to draw from all parts the famous gamblers of the day and the young bloods, who having lost heavily in London were prepared to stake their fortunes elsewhere. A certain Mr. Nash in 1704 went to Bath with a party of young men solely for the purpose of taking a hand in the reckless gambling for which it was notorious. Nash, who at the time was under thirty years of age and who already had behind him a reputation for eccentricities of all kinds, some of them not too creditable, found the place much to his liking and before long became a "personage." Indeed, within a short time of his arrival in the city he stepped into the shoes of the deceased Master of Ceremonies.

Who has not heard of Beau Nash? His name has become a tradition. The full story of his life is a history in itself. To Oliver Goldsmith we owe his biography and to much of the literature of the period, stories of his picturesque personality. Idealistic, ridiculous, generous, theatrical, and above all a great organizer and showman, Nash transformed the whole atmosphere of Bath almost from the commencement of his assumed kingship. He made laws for the conduct of social life, for the arrangement of Balls, and in fact decided what should and what should not be regarded as polite. He held Bath in his autocratic sway for half a century and when, full of years, he died, was carried in great ceremony in a procession, the splendour of which has never been rivalled in Bath, to an honoured grave in the Abbey.

During the early days of Beau Nash's regime (1727) a young architect arrived from Yorkshire. His name was John Wood, his antecedents more or less unknown. He looked upon the fashionable life of Bath with an imaginative mind, and saw in it the promise of a future for the city which could only be realized by proper building development. With no other encouragement than his own enthusiasm at the age of twenty-three he set out to design great layouts for a future city. Streets, terraces, temples and theatres. Nothing was too great for this young idealist. He later published a book in two volumes (1747), in which he described Bath and his proposals for its development, and illustrated it with drawings of his great schemes. Unlike some young men of his age who dream dreams with-

out result, Wood found appreciation in a certain Dr. Gay living in Hatton Garden, London, who owned much of the land round Bath, and who gave him his first chance of turning his fantasies into realities.

He built Gay Street and then speculated in the building of Queen Square. He built the North and South Parades, Assembly Rooms and other centres of entertainment. He was a remarkable product, and it must remain a mystery as to where he obtained his architectural knowledge and wide outlook, for at the age of twenty-three he had certainly never travelled out of England. He was an architect who never thought in terms of individual houses, but in great streets of houses, and squares and terraces. The whole of his work, both that executed and that only projected, reveals the big conception of architecture on a grand scale. Unfortunately the Town Council, as Councils sometimes do, regarded his schemes for the general development of the city with alarm. The growth of the city in a manner which Wood projected frightened them into curtailing his projects considerably, with the result that areas which are now covered in a less discriminative way were in Wood's schemes beautifully planned. He did, however, set a standard which influenced some of the later architects, such as Baldwin, who was responsible for the planning of Pulteney Street and Bath Street, amongst others. Among Wood's greatest projects were the Circus and Royal Crescent, which he never lived to see carried out, but which were completed under the direction of John Wood junior, in many ways a better architect than his father.

That the Woods' work did not altogether meet with the approval of the people of the day is obvious from the remarks of Matthew Bramble in Smollett's "Humphrey Clinker." Through the mouth of this testy but likeable old gentleman, Smollett witheringly refers to the Circus, which was then being built, as the "Colosseum turned inside out." This same Circus, owing to the number of doctors who resided there, was later on sometimes referred to as "the pill-box." The Royal Crescent which the younger Wood was perhaps almost entirely responsible for, is certainly one of the finest things of its kind in England. Standing as it does on an eminence with wide stretches of park and open country before it, it presents one of the most noble and dignified pictures in the country.

The younger Wood built the Assembly Rooms which still remain in existence, although diverted from their original use. The Concert Room in which the lovely Elizabeth Linley sang and won the heart of Sheridan, is now a dance hall: and the Ball Room which witnessed night after night the mincing steps of the minuet is now a cinema.



THE ROYAL CRESCENT, BATH

Many architects followed the Woods and made their contribution to the city, including Baldwin and Palmer, the latter being responsible for the City Hall, and also for the present Pump Room which he rebuilt.

No one visiting Bath should fail to make a pilgrimage to Prior Park, the great mansion designed by the younger Wood for Ralph Allen, a remarkable personage who rose from humble circumstances to be a figure of some importance in 18th century England. It was he who revolutionized the postal system, and became a wealthy man as a result. He owned many of the quarries round Bath from whence the stone came to build the city, and to demonstrate that it could be used on a big scale he built his great mansion on the crest of a hill over-looking a great sweep of luxurious country. Apart from the interest in the actual building itself, another interest is created by the long string of 18th century worthies who visited there, and as it may truly be said there was scarcely anyone in the literary, artistic or fashionable society of the times in

England who did not visit Bath sometime during their life, so it may be said that there was hardly anyone of note who visited Bath who was not sooner or later a guest of the cultured Allen, who incidentally figures as the good Squire Allworthy in Fielding's "Tom Jones."

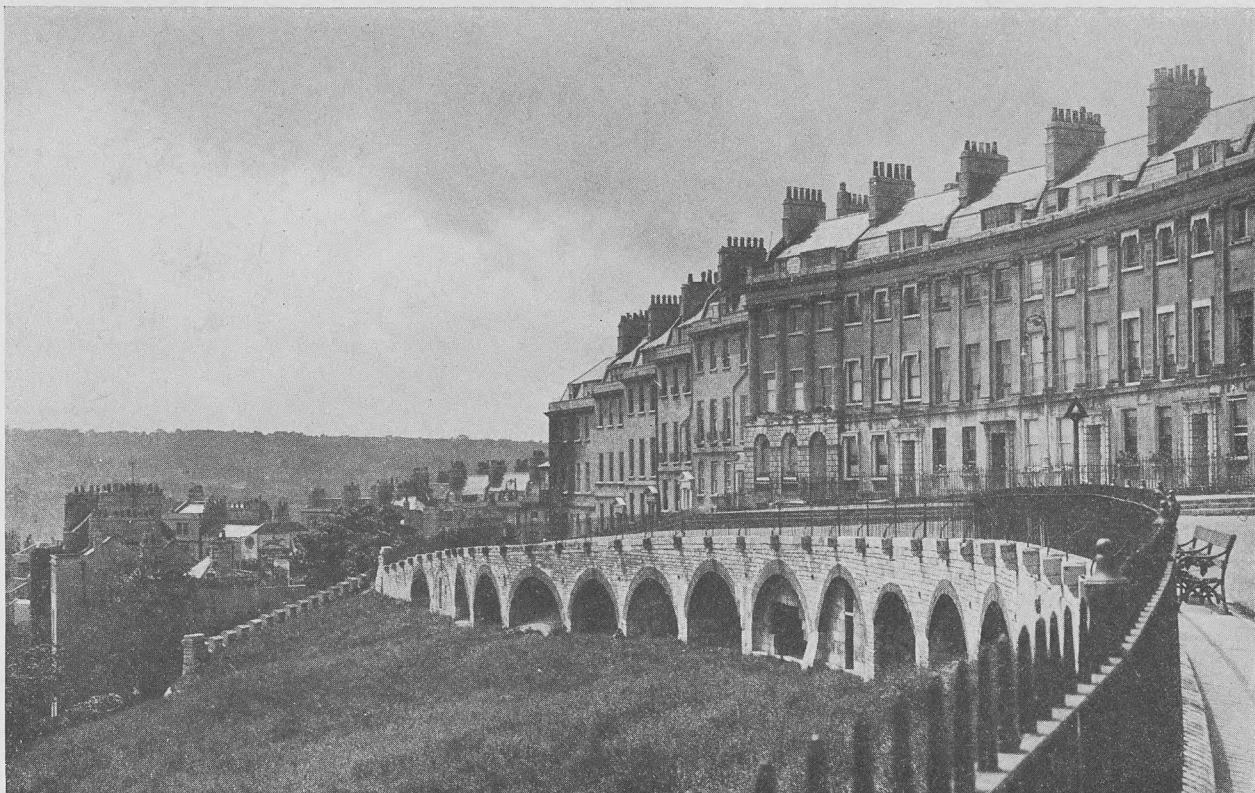
Today Bath is a prosperous city grown far beyond bounds of even Wood's concept, but it is still redolent of the gay and elegant 18th century life. In the older parts its streets have changed but little and the Parades, once buzzing with lively chatter, scandal and intrigue, are still there. To wander through the streets of the city is to recall memories of many personages who added illustrious pages to the history of the early 18th and 19th centuries, in literature, art, the drama and politics. Richardson, Fielding, Smollett, Pope, Sheridan, Walpole, Wesley, Mrs. Siddens, Elizabeth Linley, Fanny Burney, the gentle Jane Austen, and the homely Dickens, all these and innumerable others spent much of their time there and left impressions on this remarkable city.



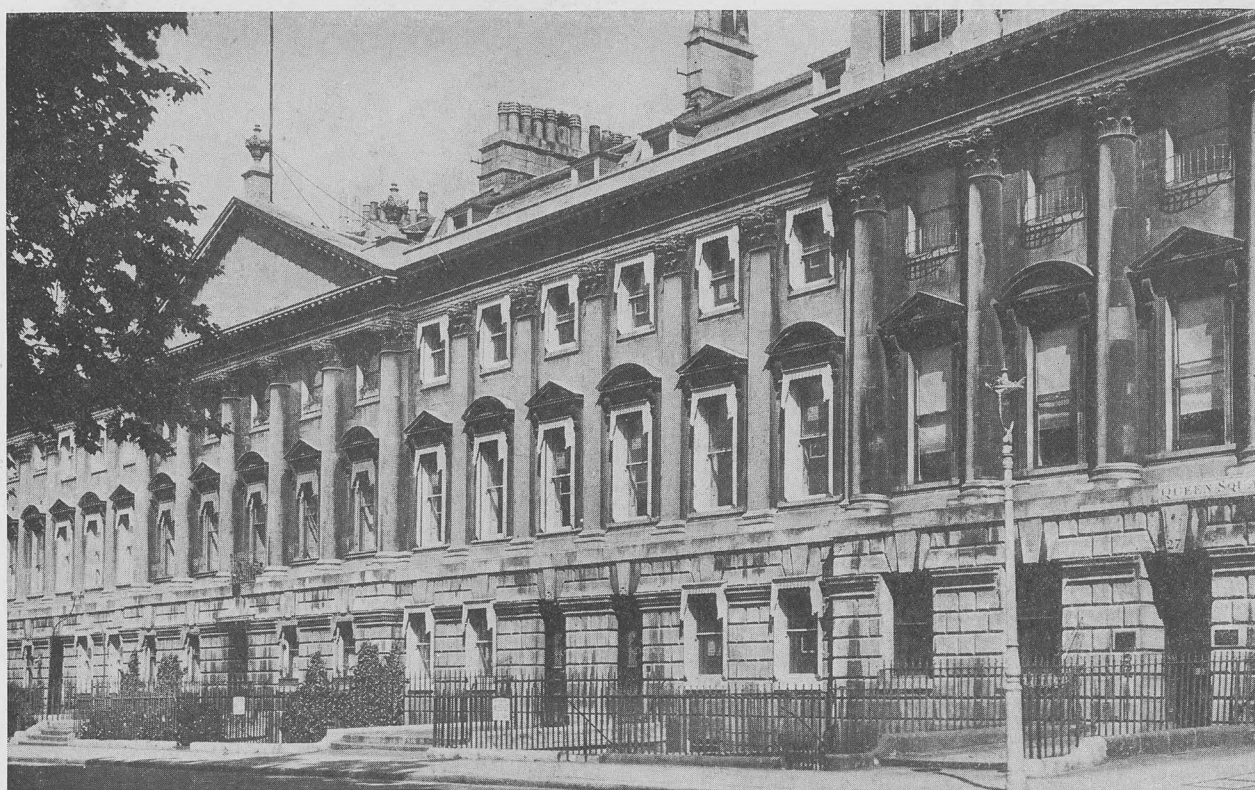
PULTENEY STREET, BATH



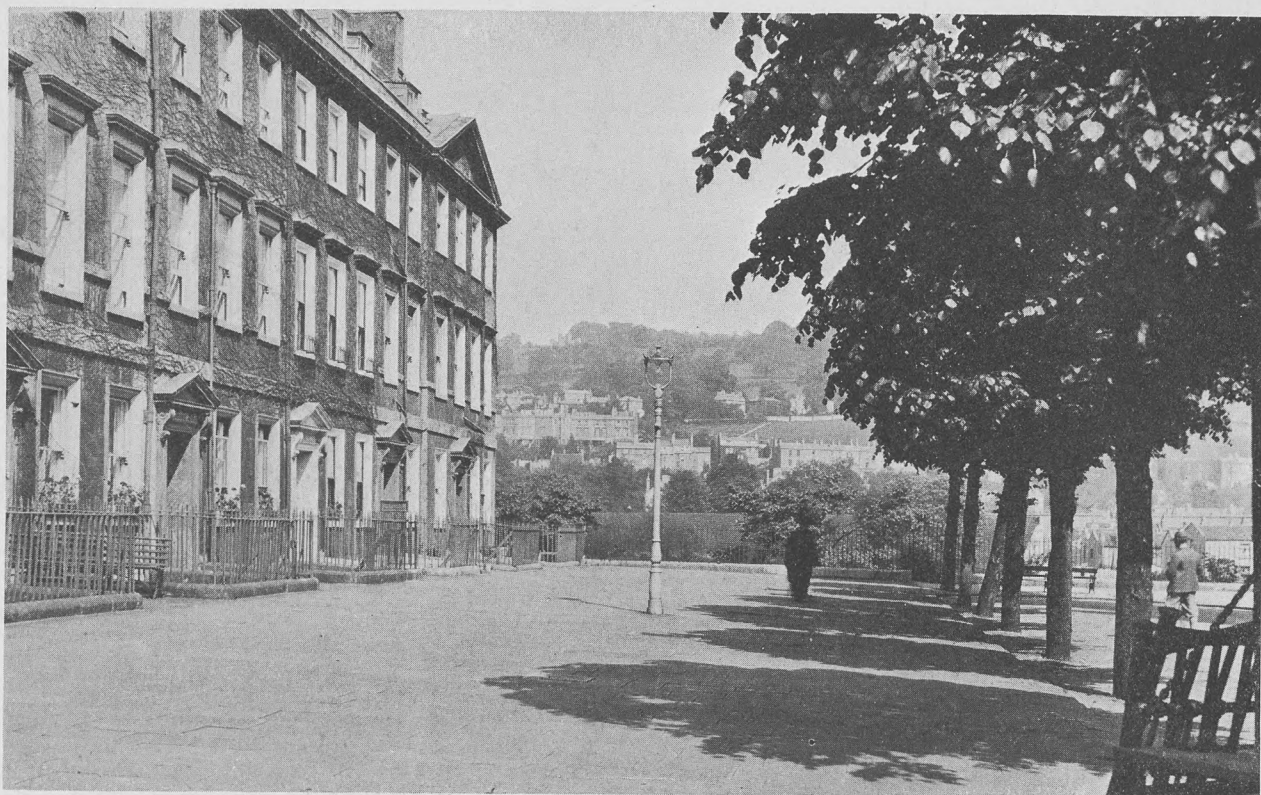
THE CIRCUS, BATH



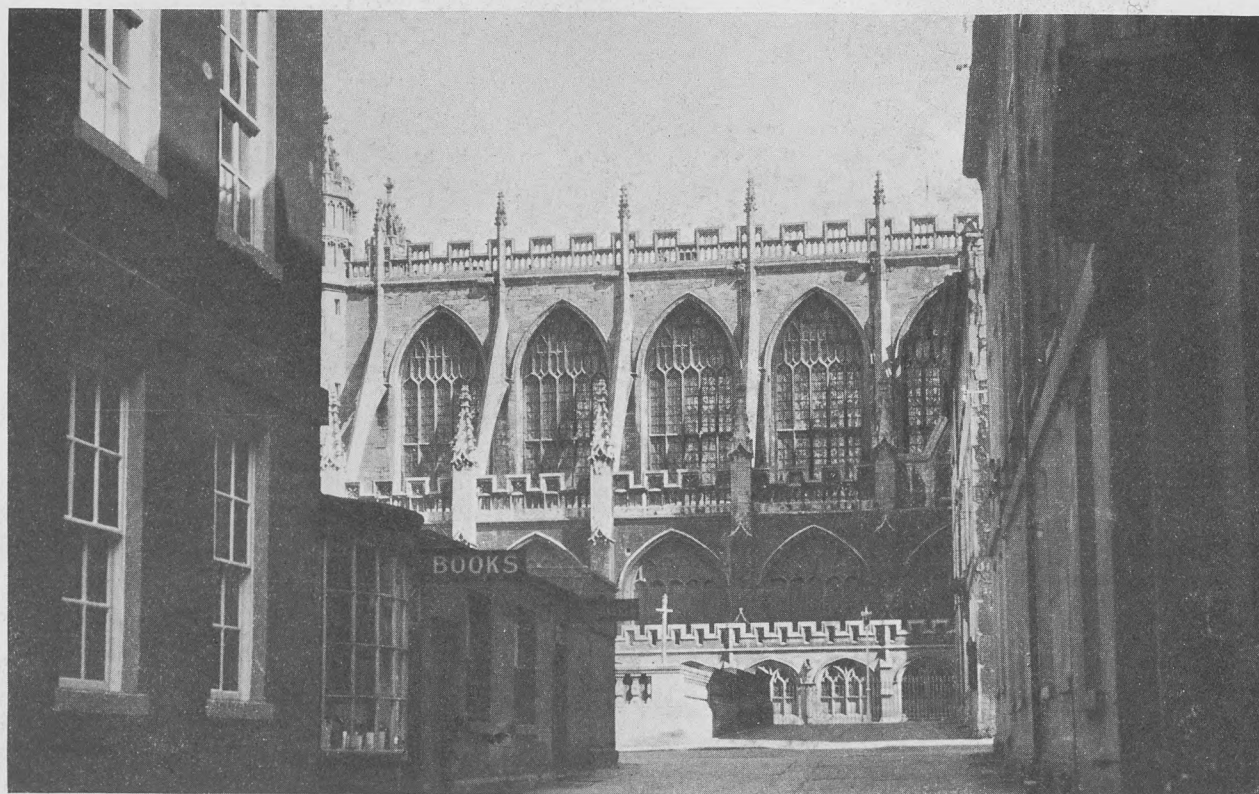
CAMDEN CRESCENT, BATH



QUEEN SQUARE, BATH



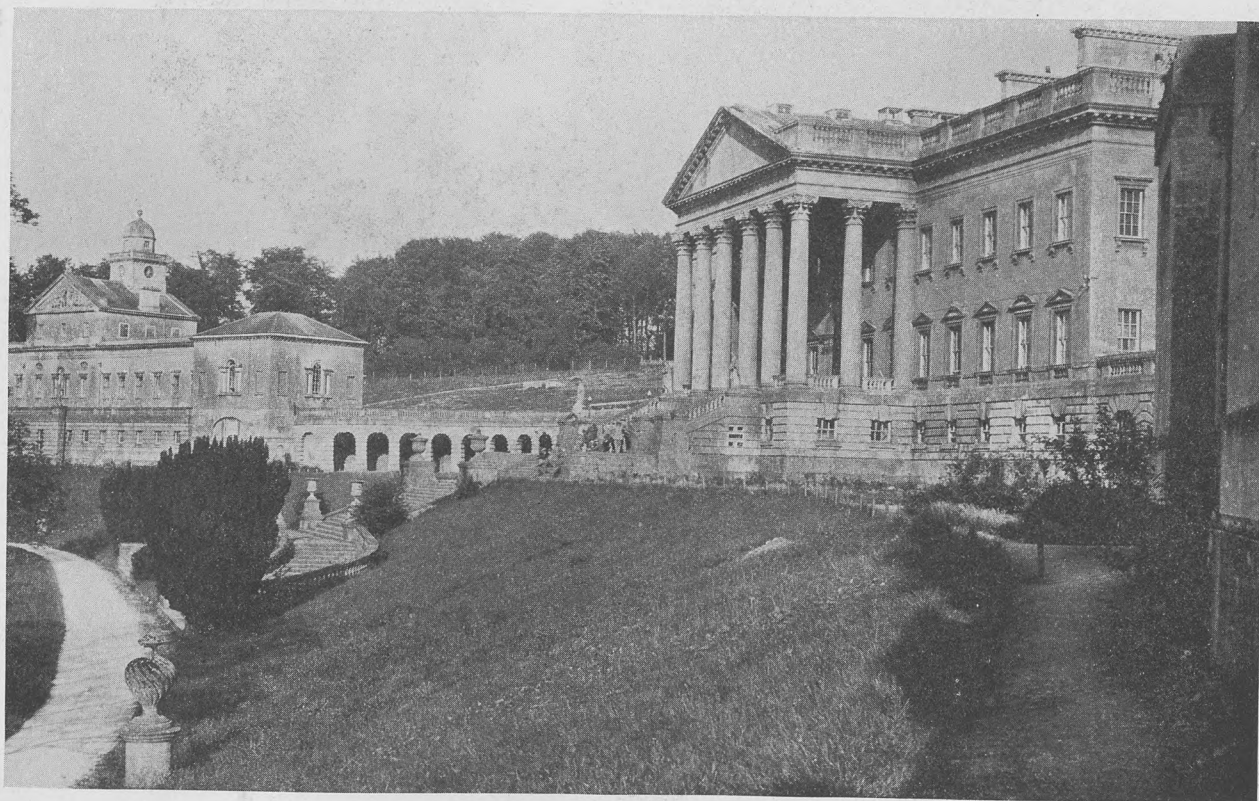
NORTH PARADE, BATH



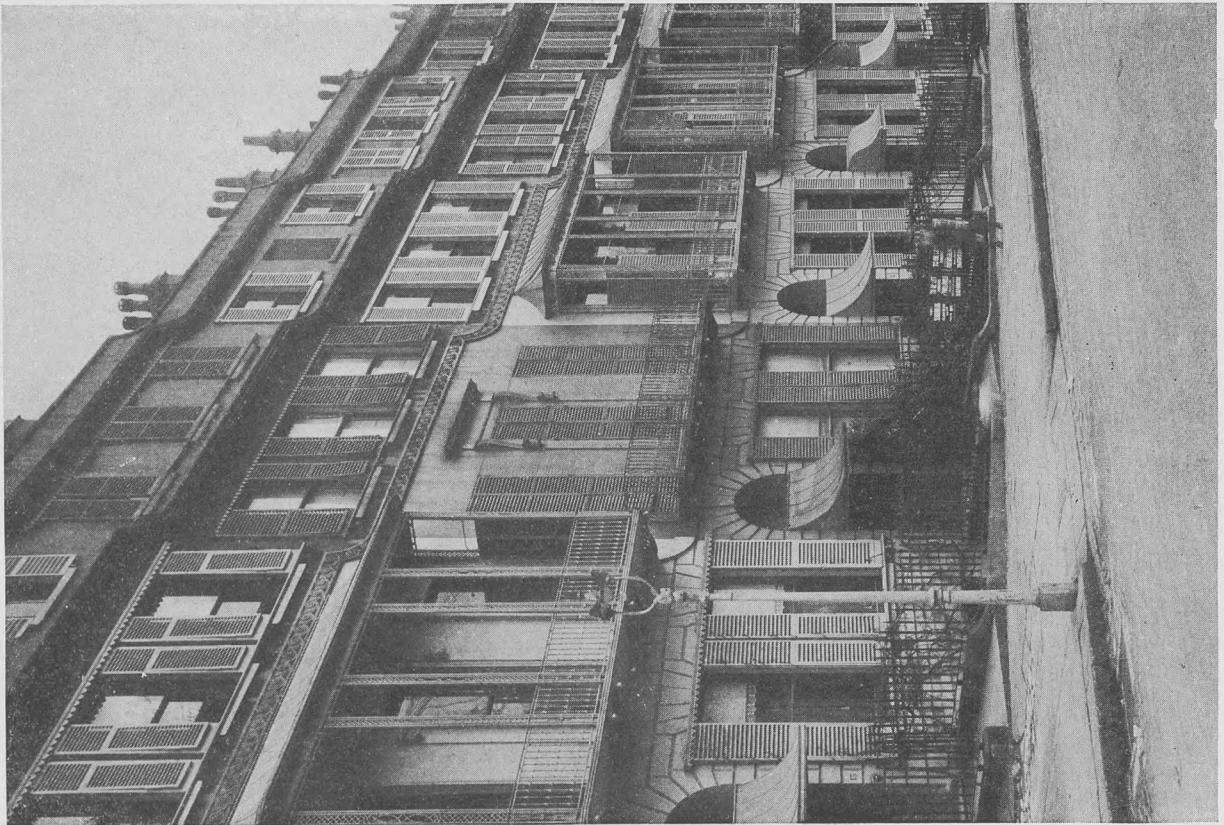
SOUTH SIDE OF ABBEY, BATH



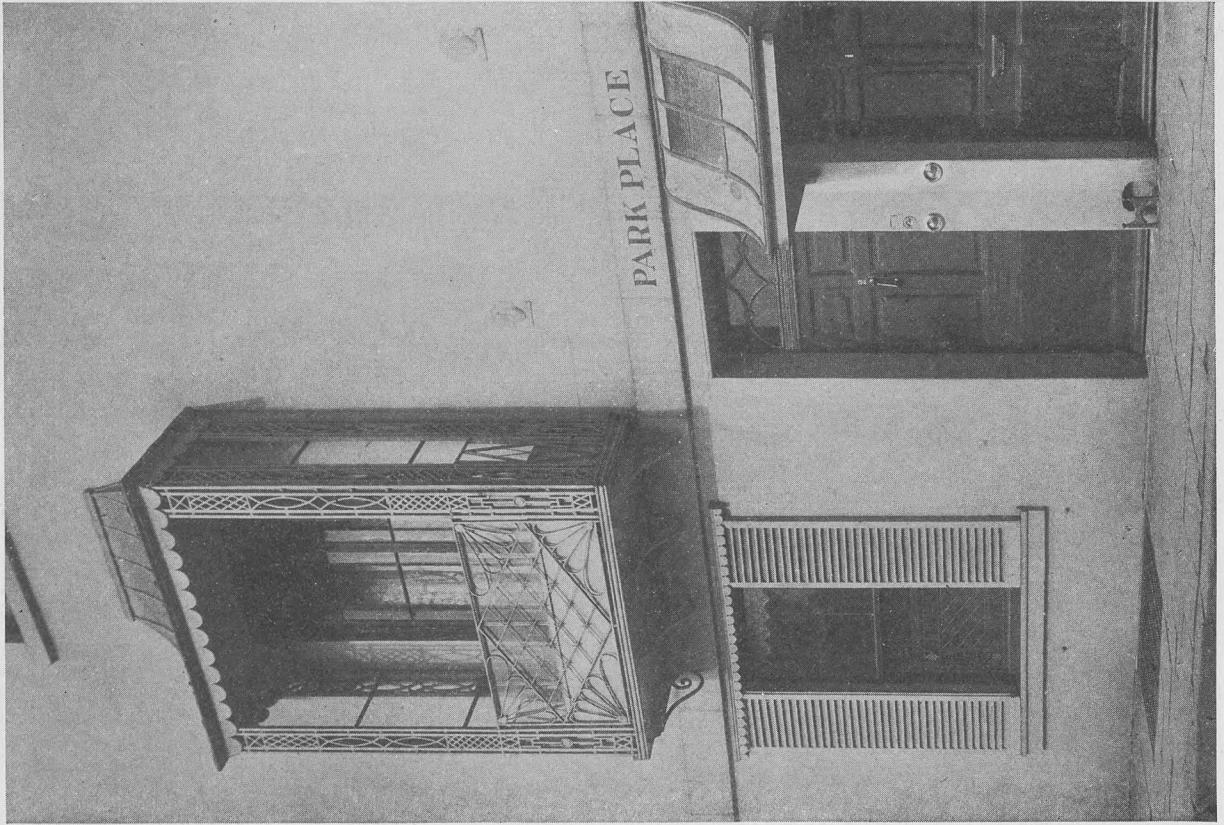
SOUTH PARADE, BATH



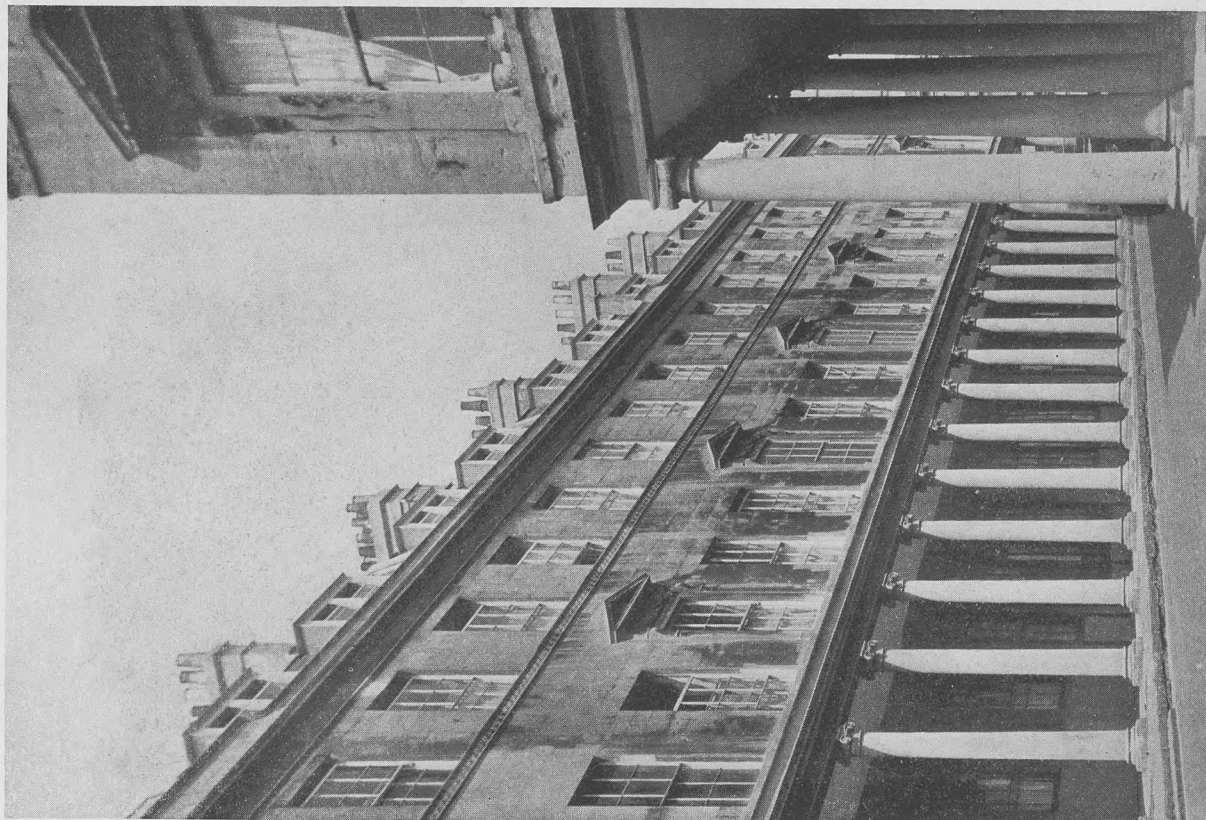
PRIOR PARK, BATH (STABLE BLOCK AT LEFT)



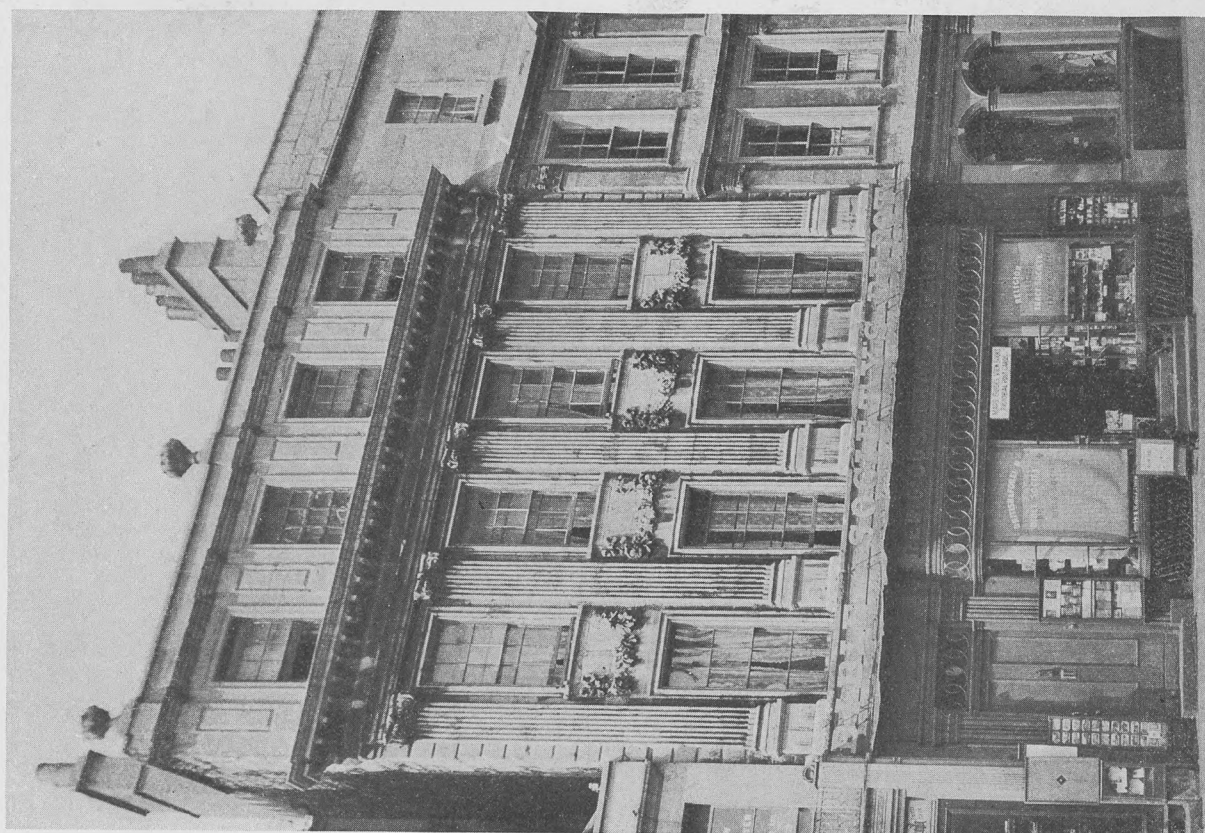
STREET IN BATH



BALCONY, BATH

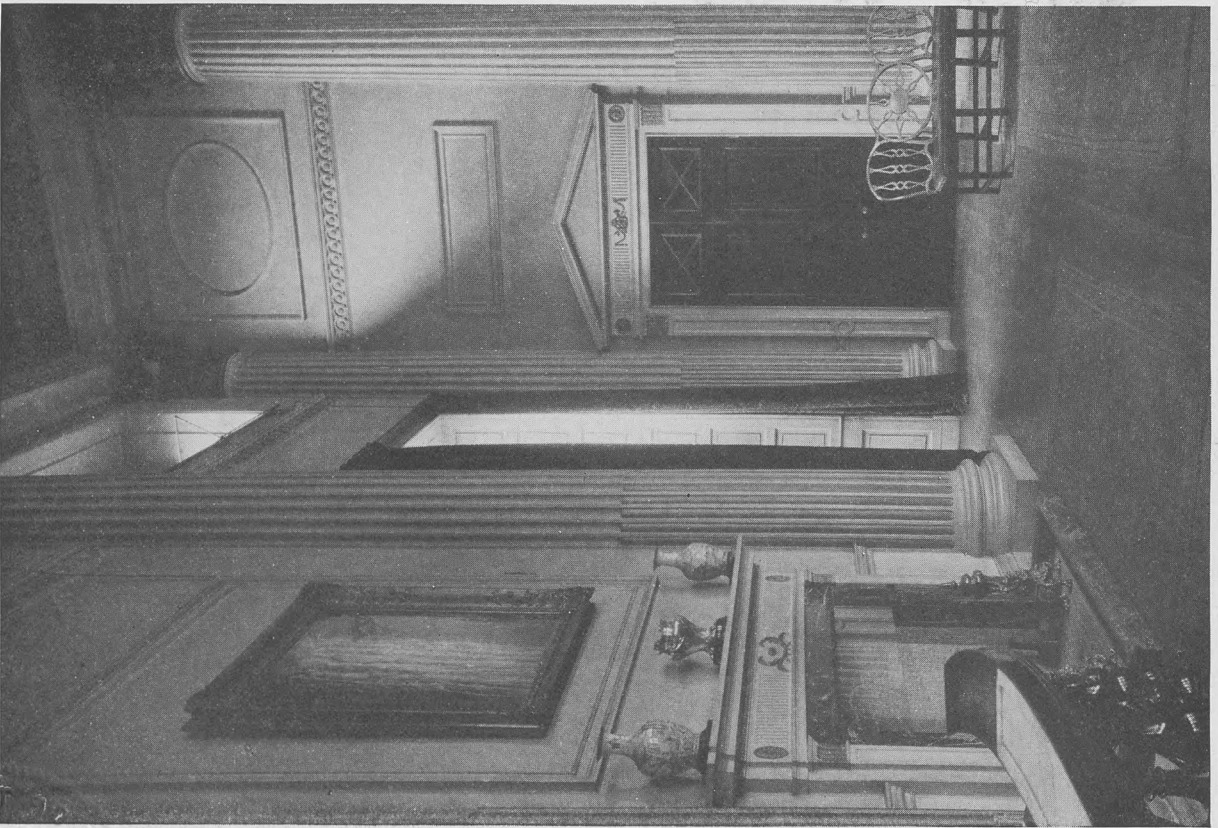


BATH STREET, BATH

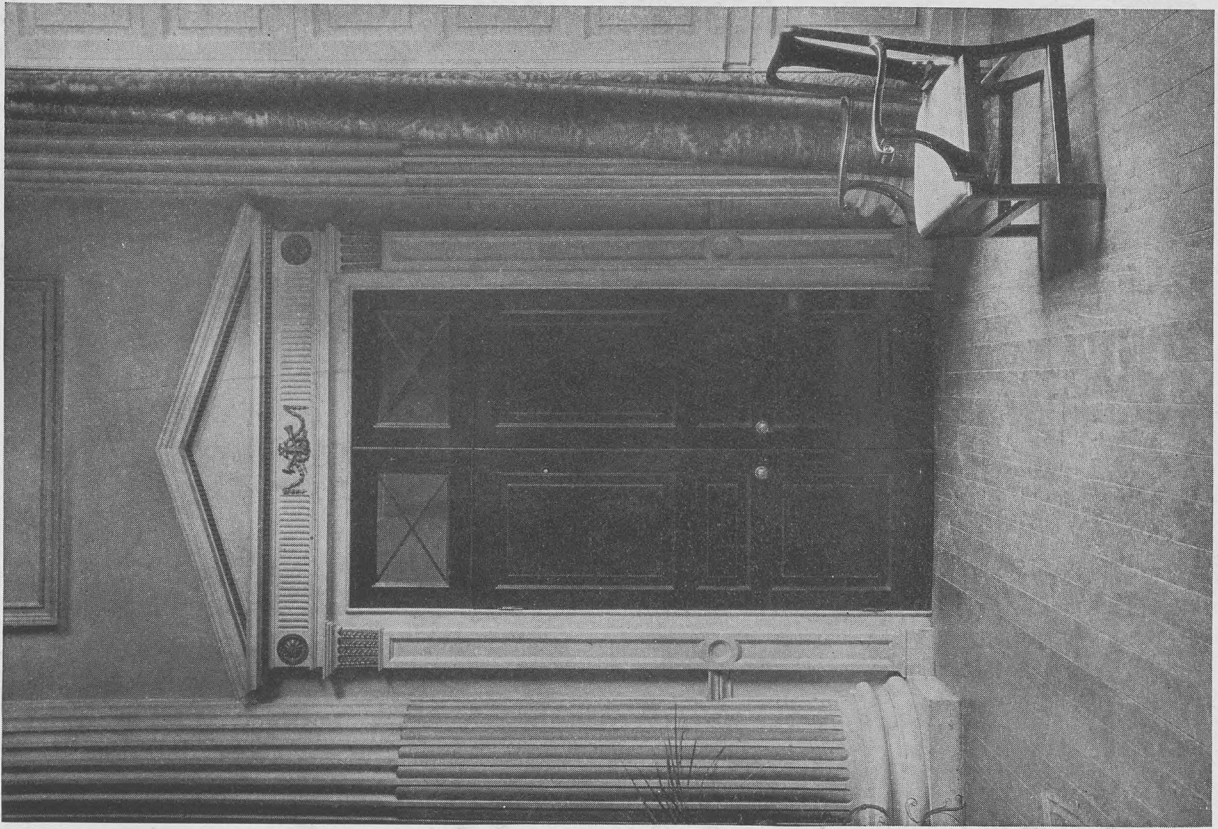


MARSHAL WADE'S HOUSE, BATH





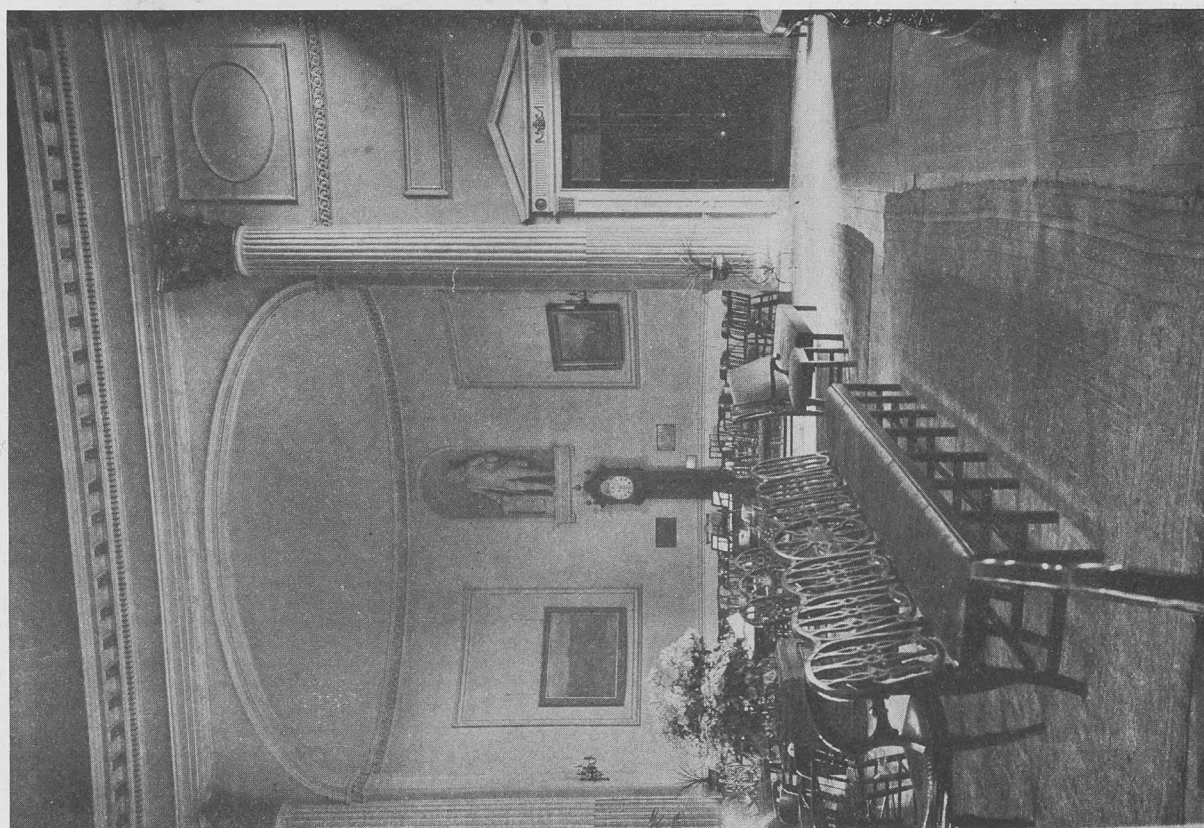
DETAIL OF PUMP ROOM, BATH



DETAIL OF PUMP ROOM, BATH



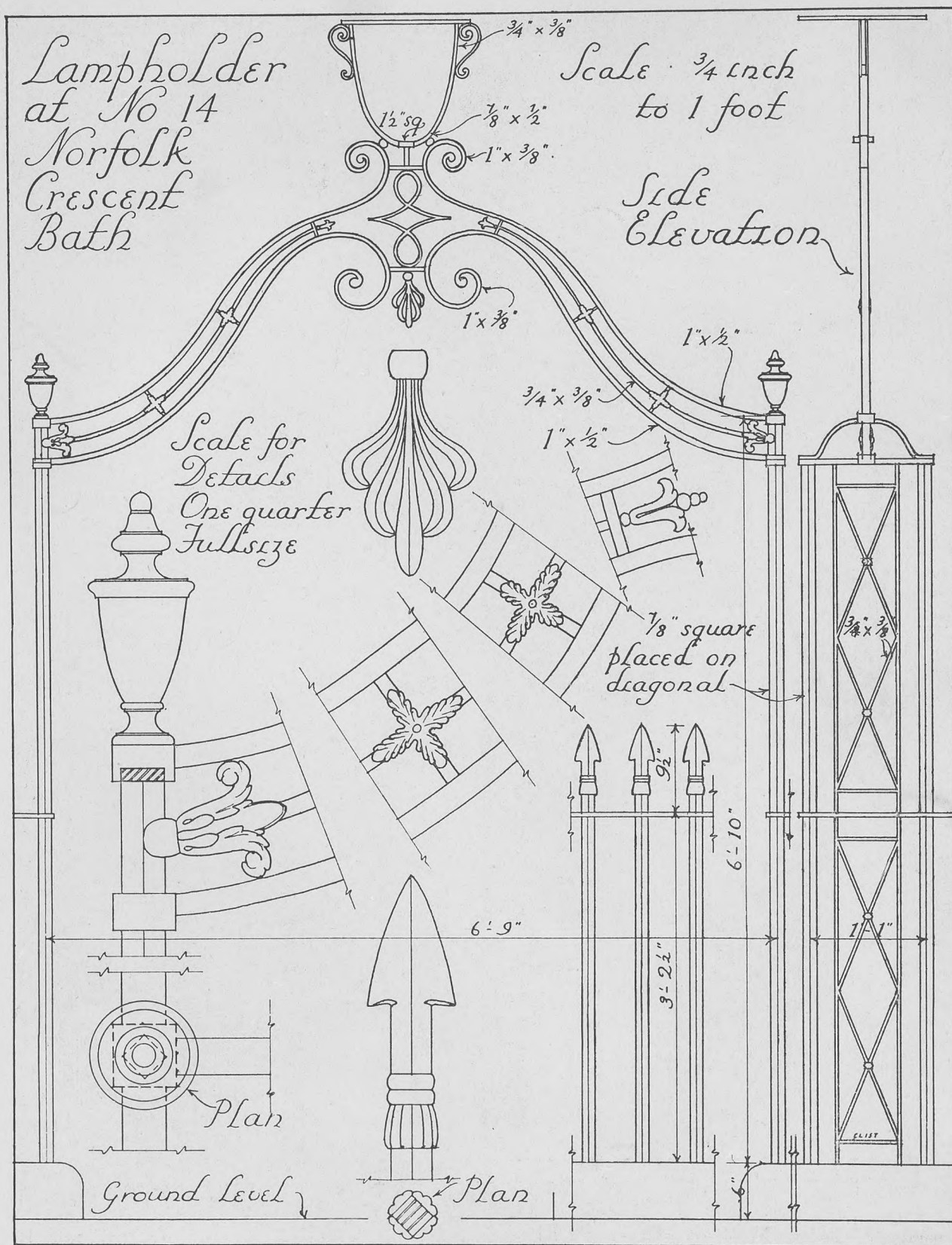
BANQUETTING ROOM IN GUILD HALL, BATH



PUMP ROOM, BATH (SHOWING SEVEN-BACK SETTEE)



LAMPHOLDER ON NORFOLK CRESCENT, BATH



SEE ILLUSTRATION ON OPPOSITE PAGE



The charm of painted brick or stone walls is greatly enhanced by the use of a tile roof, as is shown by this detail of a country home near Philadelphia where the roof is covered with IMPERIAL Roofing Tiles. Variations in great numbers both as to color and texture can be had to meet individual requirements of design and taste.

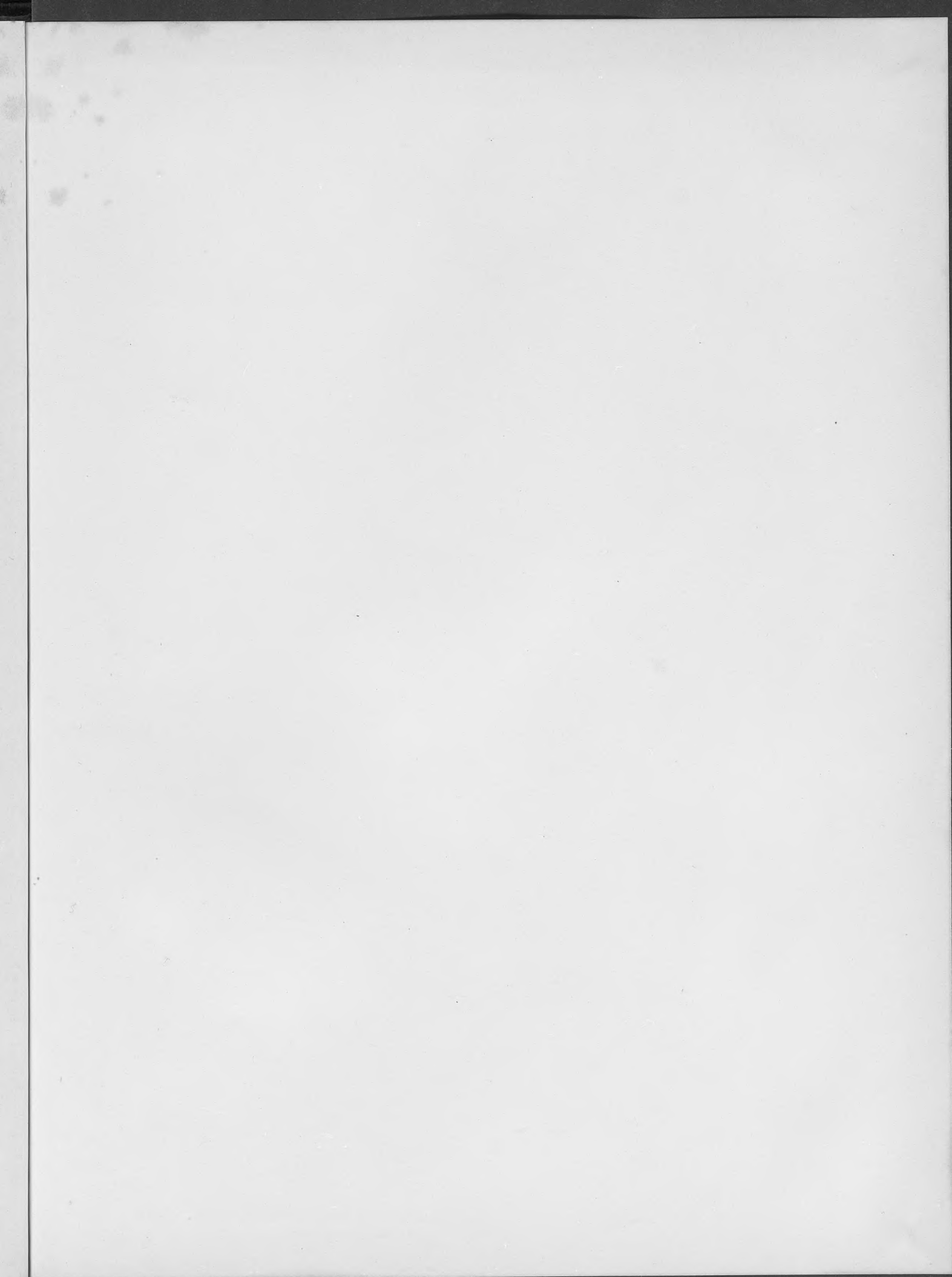
LUDOWICI-CELADON COMPANY

Makers of IMPERIAL Roofing Tiles

CHICAGO: 104 SOUTH MICHIGAN AVENUE
NEW YORK: 565 FIFTH AVENUE

WASHINGTON: 758 FIFTEENTH STREET, N.W.

438
70









DO NOT CIRCULATE

